

Petersham Center School
School Committee Minutes
January 22, 2013

In Attendance: Chuck Berube, Dana Kennan, Russell Fontaine, Patricia Martin, Tari Thomas
Rebecca Phillips, Wendie LeBlanc, Christina Boyer-Thompson, and Ann Degnan

Not In Attendance: Superintendent Michael Baldassarre

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Berube at 6:17 p.m.

A motion to approve the November 27th minutes was made by Russell Fontaine. Dana Kennan abstained because he had missed the meeting, but the motion was seconded by Chuck Berube and passed with the provision that the November minutes reflect that Dana Kennan was not in attendance. Chuck stated that he was not prepared to move the October minutes due to questions he had at the previous school committee meeting regarding some wording. Dana Kennan moved to approve the October minutes as is and Russell seconded and the motion was passed.

Education Evaluation: Wendie LeBlanc stated that she sent it to the MTA and the staff has looked at it. Only 2 small wording changes are needed and then the final copy will be sent to the School Committee for review and approval.

Superintendent Evaluation: Chuck Berube attended a workshop by Anne MacKenzie, the Director of the Lower Pioneer Valley Collaborative. Chuck felt the presentation was very informative and helpful. The Evaluation was postponed to a time when Superintendent Baldassarre could be present.

Wellness Policy: The wellness policy was passed out to all in attendance. It was explained that each school has its own culture and that the Advisory Committee could make recommendations regarding the policy. Dana Kennan explained that while the Advisory Committee could make recommendations, it was up to each of the individual School Committees to make it a policy.

Physical Restraint Policy: Tari Thomas passed out a revised Physical Restraint policy for the members to review.

Coordinated Program Review: Rebecca Phillips noted that there were 4 small areas that Petersham was cited on. Corrections on these 4 items needed to be made. Mrs. Phillips did inform the Committee that one of the items was appealed but overturned. Tari Thomas stated that Petersham did very well with their Program Review. Mrs. Phillips told the Committee that all items were corrected by November 12th and everything has been updated.

Communications from Dr. Conway and Supt. Baldassarre: Tari Thomas gave everyone a handout explaining the retirement of Special Education Director, Dr. Jay Conway and Assistant Director,

Sandra Paige. Mrs. Thomas explained that there are 27 applications for Dr. Conway's position and that they would be selecting candidates to interview in the upcoming week. Mrs. Thomas went on to explain to the Committee that as of now there are 5 Team Chairs, one Director and one Assistant Director for Special Education in the District. She explained that they were going to take all of these positions and consolidate into 3 positions – Director, Assistant Director, and a Consolidated Team Chair for all the schools. Pat Martin explained that right now there is no common thread or language on the IEPs between all the buildings and that a Consolidated Team Chair would ensure that everything would remain the same with the style and writing of the IEPs. This is a cost neutral position and the Consolidated Team Chair would be responsible for sitting in on each IEP meeting. This would be a full time 183 day position and not a stipend position.

Dana Kennan stated that more thought should be put into the 183 day position because there are times during the summer months when this position would be needed. It was decided that this job description would be reviewed before posting. Chuck Berube asked if these positions should be reviewed by the School Committee members and Tari agreed that they should look over the job postings and pay special attention to the 3rd role of Consolidated Team Chair.

A quick discussion about placing School Committee member information on our website followed and it was decided that the members' names and emails be placed on the website in case anyone in the community had questions or concerns.

Hiring of New Consolidated District PPS Director: Tari explained that out of the 27 candidates for the position, 3-5 candidates were going to be interviewed on January 29, 2013.

Tari Thomas passed out responses from community members regarding the interest of a pre-school at the Petersham Center School. A small sample was given to the members, with there being a positive feedback on interest in the pre-school. Tari also passed out a budget timeline for the Committee's review.

Chuck brought up a concern from a community member regarding our water drinking well and a firm that delivers cement covers for the protection of the well. It was explained to the Committee by Mrs. Phillips that our drinking supply cover is welded shut and that there shouldn't be a need for this. She stated that she would check with the DEP regarding any changes that might need to be made to the cover.

The date of the next meeting was discussed, but no date was set. Possibility of tying in a meeting with the Finance Committee was discussed, but it was decided to try and have a February meeting to review our budget before meeting with the FinCom sometime in March.

Motion made to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 p.m. with a second by Russell Fontaine and all in favor.